

Record

THE BAPTIST

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

182:35
MS

SEP 04 2008

CE 1877
4, 2008
DL. 132
No. 35



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

Miss. Baptists on scene of Gustav

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

A Mississippi Baptist disaster relief assessment team was on the Gulf Coast hours after Hurricane Gustav raked the state on Labor Day on its way to landfall southwest of New Orleans.

Jim Didlake, director of men's ministry for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) in Jackson and Mississippi Baptists' disaster relief coordinator, and Barri Shirley, MBCB associate executive director for business services, are heading up the team.

Didlake reported on the morning of September 2 that many areas of the Gulf Coast he has inspected thus far have encountered considerable flooding, downed trees, and electrical power outages.

"There's going to be a need for some cleanup and 'mud-out' work," he said, referring to the procedure used when Baptist volunteers remove materials such as wallboard and carpet from a home that has been flooded.

"There will also be a need for financial assistance, building materials, and repair work," he said, adding that the MBCB Disaster Relief Unit's mass feeding operation may be dispatched to hard-hit areas of southwest Mississippi.

"The spirit of the people to whom we've talked is good," Didlake said.

Relieved Mississippians expressed gratitude that Gustav delivered only a glancing blow to the state, unlike Hurricane



RAINY BUT READY - Terry Jones (left), national communications coordinator for Southern Baptist Disaster Relief and a member of Blackshear Church in Flowery Branch, Ga., talks with Terry Henderson (center), national disaster relief director for the North American Mission Board in Alpharetta, Ga., and Tom Westerfield, communications coordinator for the Kentucky Baptist Convention's disaster relief unit and a member of First Church, Hopkinsville, Ky., on September 2 at Garaywa Camp and Conference Center in Clinton. Disaster relief units from across the Southern Baptist Convention are utilizing Garaywa as a staging area for post-Hurricane Gustav disaster relief along the Gulf Coast. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Katrina three years earlier that came ashore near Bay St. Louis and caused destruction not seen since Hurricane Camille in 1969.

The Sun-Herald newspaper in Biloxi reported September 2 that 92,571 homes statewide were without power, with more than half in the six southernmost counties of Pearl River, Stone, George, Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson.

The only known fatality at publication deadline was reported to be the result of a weather-related traffic accident in Pike County.

Jim Futral, MBCB executive director-treasurer, appealed to Mississippi Baptists to find a place of service in the post-Gustav relief effort.

"People along the Gulf Coast held their breath for several days as Hurricane Gustav was making his arrival," Futral said. "Already, Southern

Baptist Convention Disaster Relief feeding and recovery teams have been mobilized and deployed into areas damaged or destroyed by Gustav.

"No doubt, it could have been much worse but still there is destruction and loss all across the Coast. Please be in prayer for our brothers and sisters in the affected areas. Lend your support at whatever opportunity you may have and, if you or your church desires, make financial contributions."

Checks can be made payable to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and designated to Hurricane Relief on the memo line. Contributions can be mailed the MBCB Business Office, Hurricane Relief, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

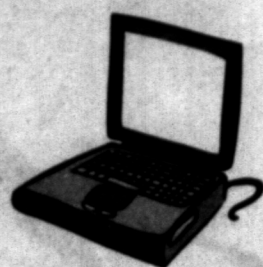
"Your thoughtfulness and graciousness is a constant source of amazement for the people across the world. God bless you as we love and help one another," Futral said.

A number of churches affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention have opened their doors to shelter large numbers of people involved in what is being described as a record evacuation from south Mississippi and south Louisiana, as well as metro New Orleans. Officials estimated the Louisiana evacuation alone at nearly two million people.

For the most up-to-date information on the developing Hurricane Gustav relief effort, check the MBCB web site at www.mbc.org.



SHELTERING EVACUEES - First Church, Jackson's Madison campus on Yandell Road near Gluckstadt served as a shelter for 70 elderly residents evacuated from St. Margaret's Daughters Home in the lower ninth ward of New Orleans, ahead of Hurricane Gustav's landfall on September 1 a few miles south of New Orleans. The Home's administrators were awaiting word at publication deadline on whether their base facility in New Orleans was damaged by Gustav. The St. Margaret's Daughters Home was destroyed when levees failed during Hurricane Katrina in August 2005. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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VOLUME 132 • NUMBER 35
(ISSN-0005-5778)

Published weekly except weeks of July 4
and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist
Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street,
Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$9.35 per
year payable in advance. Economy plans
available for cooperating Mississippi churches.
Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS.
Member, Association of State Baptist Papers.
Deadlines: News items — one calendar
week prior to requested publication date.
Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to
requested publication date. All submissions
are subject to editing.

Satan makes a comeback (as always)

With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the subsequent collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and its slave states, several historians and academicians rashly declared "the end of history." The Cold War was over, along with the nuclear hair trigger under which the world had lived for more than four decades.

Many learned people believed that Western civilization had prevailed at long last, with its attendant liberal democracies and all the freedoms that went along with those democracies. Christians enthusiastically believed the world was safe for the spread of the Gospel, and perhaps for a while they were right.

For a short while, as it turned out.

The world is and always has been a dangerous place for Christians. Now it seems that Satan, who was rocked back on his heels for a time, has regained lost momentum. All around the world, he's making a comeback — as he always has.

The communist government in China, emboldened by the West's limp response to authoritarian measures imposed during the just-completed Olympics in Beijing, is confidently planning an unprecedented purging of unregistered house churches in that country.

"Tragically but predictably, the Olympics have been the occasion of a massive crackdown designed to silence and put beyond reach all those Chinese whose views differ from the government line," said Congressman Chris Smith, a Republican from New Jersey. "For so many brave Chinese men and women... this has been a terrible summer, not in spite of but precisely because of the Olympic Games."

Zhou Yongkang, head of the all-powerful Central Political and Legislative Committee within the Communist Party, who has called for "extraordinary measures" against unregistered house churches in a country where churches must register with the state and adhere to a strict set

of rules for engaging in worship.

Such statements leave no doubt that Christianity is in danger in the land of Lottie Moon, perhaps as never before, but China is by no means alone in its persecution of Christians.

As reported in the article below, Hindus in the Indian state of Orissa are murdering Christians in revenge for the assassination of a prominent Hindu swami. Although indigenous Christians in that state comprise around 2.4% of the total population and have no political power, they are being blamed for the death of the swami and have been targeted *en masse* for violent reprisals.

It doesn't matter that the local government doesn't believe Christians are responsible and has even fingered a terrorist group as the actual assassins, Christians are paying the 2,000-year-old price for being Christians.

The total surviving Christian population in at least one Orissa town has fled to the local forests with no food or shelter, and little expectation for returning to their homes. What a sad state of affairs.

In Sudan, Christians continue to be persecuted despite that corrupt government's assurances that such persecution has been officially halted. In the recent past, Christian parents have been executed in front of their young children who were then sold into sexual slavery across the Arab world.

In July of this year, the prosecutor at the International Criminal Court in The Hague, Netherlands, requested an arrest warrant for the president of Sudan's mil-



CHRISTIANS UNDER PRESSURE — A Hindu prepares to take the "holy dip" during the annual Kumbh Mela festival in Ujjain, India, attended by up to 30 million pilgrims. A smaller Kumbh Mela, organized by Hindu radicals, is also conducted in India's Gujarat state to pressure Hindu converts to Christianity to "reconvert" to Hinduism. In the state of Orissa, Christians are being killed to avenge the murder of a prominent Hindu holy man although they are innocent of his assassination. (BP photo)

itant Islamic regime, charging him with genocidal acts in the Darfur region. No one really knows how many Christians have died during Omar Hassan al-Bashir's bloody regime, but the country's Christian population inarguably has been decimated.

Yet these faithful followers around the world hang on, if only by the thinnest of threads. Jesus warned us of such times (Matt. 24:9, Luke 21:16-17), but it still hurts to watch believers go through such trials — especially as we sit safe, comfortable, and protected in our great country.

Let us not take for granted God's manifold gifts to us. Let us pray as never before for our persecuted brothers and sisters around the world. They are living a faith of bravery and commitment, such as American Christians have never experienced.

Someday soon, though, we may. We may.

Christians killed to avenge Hindu swami's death

BHUBANESWAR, India (BP) — The murder of a Hindu swami, reportedly by Maoist terrorists, has unleashed a frenzy of violence against Christians falsely accused of the killing in Orissa, a state in eastern India.

The anti-Christian attacks have drawn national and worldwide condemnation from religious and social leaders. Some authorities have called for the Indian government to send troops to Orissa, where the Hindu-dominated state administration reportedly has been unable to stop the killing despite a curfew and reported "shoot-to-kill" order against rioters in the worst-hit areas.

More than 20 men, women, and children had been beaten, hacked, or burned to death by Aug. 28, five days after the killing of Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati, a leader of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad sect. Police said a Maoist insurgent group active in the region carried out the assassination of the swami and four of his followers. The group itself also reportedly claimed responsibility.

Hindu extremists blamed the killing on Christians in Orissa, who comprise about 2.4% of Orissa's 36.7 million people. The Christian total includes up to 500,000 Baptists.

The swami's body was carried through villages in the area while Hindu activists reportedly shouted such slogans as "Kill

Christians and destroy their institutions!" Hindu mobs, stoked by the false accusation, have attacked and burned hundreds of homes, churches, schools, convents, and orphanages in the days since, driving thousands of terrified Christians into the forests.

"All Christian villages [are] empty in Kandhamal as Christians, old and young, sick and pregnant mothers [are] hiding in forests exposed to the non-stop monsoon rains without food," said Swarupnanda Patra, general secretary of the All Orissa Baptist Churches Federation, in an Aug. 26 message to the Baptist World Alliance (BWA).

"Now we have no request except prayer from our Baptist world as we do not know how to face tomorrow," he said.

P. Ramesh Kumar, principal of the Balasore Technical School in Kandhamal, told the alliance, "We are all under immense danger and threat from these groups... Please continue to uphold us in your prayer particularly for the safety of Christian brothers and sisters who are now hiding themselves in jungles."

Early in the situation, Orissa government authorities downplayed the violence, then claimed it was under control. By Aug. 27, however, the Orissa High Court reportedly was calling for the deployment of troops.

The same day, the opposition Congress Party in Orissa, which is secular, moved for a no-confidence vote against the ruling Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) coalition. The motion was to be considered Aug. 29, according to reports. Meanwhile, the BJP coalition itself appeared to be fracturing amid the crisis, with some prominent members reportedly withdrawing support from the state government.

All Christian schools in India were reportedly closed Aug. 29 to protest the violence.

Orissa has seen many attacks on Christians in the past, particularly in tribal areas where Hindu groups have accused Christians of "forced conversions" of Hindus or bribing villagers to be baptized. Militants burned hundreds of churches and homes last December.

In the most notorious incident in recent years, extremists burned alive Australian Baptist missionary Graham Staines and his two young sons in 1999. Staines' widow Gladys publicly forgave the attackers and continued her work in Orissa until four years ago.

Staines told the Indo-Asian News Service Aug. 27 she is "deeply saddened" by the renewed sectarian violence in the state of Orissa.

Chinese home churches in grave danger

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The future of the persecuted church in China will be "darker before it becomes brighter," Bob Fu, president of China Aid Association, told Baptist Press as the Olympics drew to a close in Beijing.

"Given the increased persecution before and even during the Olympic Games in spite of international attention, we can only expect persecution to increase in severity in the year following the Olympic Games," Fu said.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville, also acknowledged a challenge ahead for the Chinese citizenry now that thousands of tourists have headed for home.

"We need to pray for our Chinese brothers and sisters in Christ as they struggle in their country for freedom of conscience and freedom of faith," Land said in a statement to Baptist Press.

Fu, who met with President Bush at the White House days before Bush left to attend the opening ceremony in Beijing, noted several occurrences prior to and during the Games that indicate where the country might be headed in terms of religious freedom.

"The first and most notable was the detention of House Church Alliance president Zhang Mingxuan and his wife," Fu said. "The second was the deceptive arrangements made by the Communist Party of China to accommodate President George W. Bush's visit to a house church in Beijing."

"The Chinese government staged a house church, replacing normal members with government officials," Fu stated. "Public Security Bureau authorities also tried to detain pastor Hua Huiqi for his attempt to attend the service with President Bush. On Aug. 19, four Americans were stopped in the airport for trying to bring 300 Bibles into China. The Bibles were confiscated and the Americans were released."

Also, the Chinese government had posted signs throughout Beijing requiring citizens to report any "socially unstable element," referring to house churches, so that the government could deal with them, Fu said.

"These instances combined with the harsh rhetoric of Zhou Yongkang, the leader of the Central Political and Legislative Committee within the Communist Party, who has called for 'extraordinary measures to be taken against house churches,' leaves no doubt China has no intention of easing persecution against believers," Fu said.

"We were somewhat surprised by the brazen attitude of

the Chinese government to carry out such measures in full light of the Olympic Games," he said. "[H]owever, the pattern of irrational cruelty and persecution comes as no surprise."

While some may have hoped that having the worldwide spotlight on them during the Olympics would have caused the Chinese government to loosen their grip on religious expression, Fu said it might actually have done the opposite.

"If anything, the Olympic Games have given China a bolder stance in solidifying their communist and socialist agenda. It is our concern that after the pride of hosting the Olympics, China will make an even more concentrated effort to control those 'elements deemed harmful to the harmonious society' — house churches," Fu said.

The China Aid leader said he doesn't believe protests by Westerners surrounding the Olympics had much effect on the central government in China. He does, however, hope the protests during the torch relay opened the eyes of many Chinese citizens who might now wonder why the world objects to their country's policies.

"I believe opening the eyes of ordinary citizens to the atrocities taking place in their own country will be tremendously impactful," he said. Even so, Fu reiterated that he expects persecution to increase in the years following the Olympics.

"Beyond the outright rhetoric of the CPC against house churches and other groups is the fact that in the light of the international community's focus on China during these Olympics, the CPC has made no effort to pause or even silence their outright persecution of house church members," Fu told BP. "If the CPC is willing to do this while the world is watching, what is to stop them when attention is diverted?"

All people of all nations should be able to enjoy their God-given rights, Fu said, and it is absolutely wrong of the Chinese government to deny such fundamental privileges.

"When any government tries to control these basic human rights, that government should be held accountable," he said. "We will continue to expose the atrocities and make known to



FREE TO WORSHIP? — Compared to many house churches, these Chinese worshippers openly sing hymns at the Beijing Gangwa Shi Christian Church during a morning prayer service, held in accord with government regulations. (BP photo by David G. McIntyre)

the world that what the PRC is doing is wrong, and it should stop. The harmonious society China is trying to create will only come to fruition with the sustainment of true religious freedom."

Land, who serves on the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, recalled a two-week trip he took to China in 2005. He and other commissioners traveled to various parts of China and met with religious groups and government officials.

"It was clear during the course of our trip that our Chinese hosts were increasingly frustrated that the commission delegation was not more impressed with the degree of toleration afforded religious groups in China," Land said. "During a lengthy discussion with Chinese officials on the last night of our trip, this frustration bubbled to the surface, and I explained to our Chinese hosts that we were aware of their frustration."

Land said there is no doubt that religious expression is given more latitude in today's China than in the old Soviet Union or in China under Mao Zedong, communist founder of the People's Republic of China.

"They have expanded and gilded the cage in which people of religious faith operate in the People's Republic of China," Land said, "but it's still a cage in which the government decides what degree of religious expression will be tolerated at any given time and, when the government's line is crossed, what punishments will be meted out."

"As I explained to the Chinese officials, toleration is not freedom, and what the Chinese people deserve and are entitled to is religious freedom, not religious toleration," Land said. "No one knows what the future course of religion will be in China, but it is certainly an expanding presence, particularly Christianity, in Chinese society."

Looking back

10 years ago

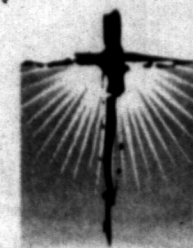
Southern Baptist Convention President Paige Patterson calls on fellow Southern Baptist Bill Clinton to resign the presidency "for the sake of the country."

20 years ago

The Southern Baptist Convention's Public Affairs Committee (PAC) requests \$75,500 from the convention for 1989-90 during the September Executive Committee meeting in Nashville. As a standing committee, the PAC does not normally have a budget.

50 years ago

Church membership in the United States reaches a record high of 104,189,724 in 1957, a gain of 964,724 members over the previous year.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

SEPTEMBER 4, 2008

VOL. 132

No. 35



**YOU CAN RESPOND
RIGHT NOW!**

*Simply share the following prayer
with God in your own words:*

1. Lord, I admit that I need you.
(*I have sinned.*)
2. I want forgiveness for my
sins and freedom from eternal
death. (*I repent.*)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose
from the grave to forgive my
sins and to restore my rela-
tionship with you.
(*I believe in Jesus.*)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus
Christ into my life. From this
time on, I want to live in a lov-
ing relationship with Him. (*I
receive Christ as my Savior
and Lord.*)

*"But as many as received him,
to them he gave the right to become
children of God, even to those who
believe in his name." (John 1:12)*

*If you make a decision for
Jesus Christ today, contact a
local Baptist church for spiritu-
al guidance.*

MS POSITIONS

PELAHATCHIE BAPTIST CHURCH IS seeking a part-time Minister of Music for Worship Services, Adult, youth, and children's choirs. Please forward resume to the Pelahatchie Baptist Church, search committee, P.O. Box 876, Pelahatchie, MS 39145, attn: Due McKinion. Email: due@rankincounty.org.

SALEM BAPTIST CHURCH, MARSHALL county, Miss., seeking part-time youth director with potential for growth. Please send resume to search committee, P.O. Box 734, Potts Camp, MS 38659.

DIRECTIONS — TEN YEARS LATER

September 1 was my 10th anniversary to be serving Mississippi Baptists as the Executive Director-Treasurer. It has been an honor, a joy, and days filled with blessings, victories, and challenges. From the very outset, I began writing an article for The Baptist Record that was entitled Directions. My intent was not to just preach a mini sermon in the weekly paper. My prayer was that at times the article might be inspirational, at other times informational, and still at other times might be somewhat intersectional. By that, I mean it may be as though we are standing at an intersection and trying to decide which way would be the best way to go. Obviously, at an intersection, every direction takes you somewhere but it may not be where you need or want to go. Week by week the Directions have come to your homes and I trust to your hearts.

There are 50 issues of The Baptist Record each year and since I have not missed a week, we just passed the 500th Directions sent out to the Mississippi Baptist family. As I considered whether to write an article each week, I asked a number of people what they thought and for the most part, I was encouraged not to do it. Like a lot of things in life, there are always a lot of good reasons not to do it. I was given many of them but I chose to do it any way. I must say that it has been a source of constant blessing and amazement to me as I run into people who I have never met who read Directions weekly. It has provided a connection for us. I have met so many of you in



Directions

*Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board*

churches, schools, at social gatherings, businesses, and on the street. I have met folks who did not particularly like something I wrote, some folks who did not understand something I wrote, and some folks who were blessed and encouraged by something they found in Directions.

Everyone who has written, called, or stopped and commented on something has been helpful to me. Through these years, I have had people ask, "How do you come up with some of those things and how do you write an article every week?" I generally respond by telling them that I actually write three or four a week and choose the worst one to put in The Baptist Record. The fact is that I often write several each week and have to select one. I never dreamed of writing 500 of them for publication. I think if someone had given me the assignment 10 years ago to write 500 articles on various subjects I probably would have declined the offer, but since they come once a week, since there are so many facets of need and celebration that take place in our world, and since I seek to stay as close to the Lord as I can where He can invade my life with His Word and make application in my daily walk, things seem to flow constantly in a direction that leads to the writing of Directions.

Just think about this. Over 500 articles and each one of them are generally around 1000 words. The editor has encouraged me to keep the articles around 600 words and although I try desperately to keep them small, they more often than not swell beyond their intended size. So do the math, and you will see that probably over a half a million words have gone into Directions over this decade. This week I want to ask you to do something. I want to ask you to write to me. You can send an email or real mail, but just drop me a note. There will be no grading of grammar or spelling, but here is what I would like you to do as you write.

Would you let me know if there were one or two articles that have been your favorites? Would you let me know if there have been articles you did not agree with or something that was disturbing to your heart and mind? Please feel free to let me know if Directions has been of any benefit to you or if in your opinion the space could

be used for purposes that are more productive. My plan is to continue writing Directions for years to come, but my not writing skills are just about as good as my writing skills. I welcome your input and suggestions.

Over the years I have run into so many people who have said, "I started to write you after reading the article about such and such." Sometimes they were telling me that it meant so much and would be helpful to them and their walk with the Lord. At other times, they let me know that they did not see it the way that I did. However, my response has always been and will always be, "Well, why didn't you drop me a note, send me an email, or pick up the phone and call?" Here is your chance and I look forward to hearing from some of you. My mailing address is Jim Futral, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530, or my email address is jfutral@mbcb.org.

I have never asked you to write me about anything and I may never do it again, but this week I hope you will. If no one writes I will assume that either no one reads, many of you have broken fingers, the postal service did not deliver your Baptist Record, or the dog ate it or in other ways used it before you saw it. If you write, I will keep writing. If you do not write, I will join you in doing the same.

CLASSIFIED ADS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SOUGHT FOR interdenominational evangelical scholarship ministry, Educating Africans for Christ. Requires management and fundraising experience, public speaking abilities, some required travel to Africa. Send resume/statement of faith to exec@eafcn.net or Box 5303, Jackson, MS 39296-5303.

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ASSOCIATE PASTOR: FBC, ROGERSVILLE, Alabama, is accepting resumes for a full-time associate pastor. Experienced in administration and education. Send resumes to search committee, P.O. Box 146, Rogersville, AL 35652.

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**Baptist's ongoing seminar
series in October addresses a
variety of health issues such
as genetic testing for cancer,
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Surgery, and breast health
imaging and support.**

For times and topics visit
www.mbhs.org or call the
**Baptist Health Line
at 601-948-6262.**

Baptist
for WOMEN

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS

Matthew 10:27 NAS

September 4, 2008

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

2008 AUDITIONS FOR THE 2009 Mississippi Baptist All-State Youth Choir and Orchestra

Open to 9th - 12th graders

Thursday, October 9, 2008

4:00 - 8:00 P.M.

Fairview Baptist Church
Columbus, Miss.

Saturday, October 11, 2008

10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

Monument Drive
Baptist Church
Tupelo, Miss.

Sunday, October 12, 2008

2:00 - 4:00 P.M.

Hernando Baptist Church
Hernando, Miss.

Saturday, October 18, 2008

10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

William Carey University
Hattiesburg, Miss.

Sunday, October 19, 2008

2:00 - 4:00 P.M.

Grace Memorial Baptist Church
Gulfport, Miss.

Saturday, October 25, 2008

10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

First Baptist Church
Meridian, Miss.

Sunday, October 26, 2008

2:00 - 4:00 P.M.

First Baptist Church
Summit, Miss.

Sunday, November 2, 2008

2:00 - 5:00 P.M.

Baptist Building
Jackson, Miss.

For More Information:
Contact the Church Music Department at
1-800-748-1651, ext. 266, 601-292-3266
or cwtaylor@mbcb.org.



**MISSISSIPPI
PraiSing**
Sept 11-13
2008



**Special Guest
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Director
LifeWay Worship
(in charge of
Hymnal Project)

Mississippi PraiSing '08 New Hymnal Introduction

Three convenient locations:

September 11 - North Oxford BC

Oxford - 7:00 p.m.

Choir rehearsal - 6:00 p.m.

September 12 - Main Street BC

Hattiesburg - 7:00 p.m.

Choir rehearsal - 6:00 p.m.

September 13 - Brandon BC

Brandon - 3:00 p.m.

Choir rehearsal - 2:00 p.m.

For more info contact the Church Music Department: 601-292-3267,
1-800-748-1651, ext. 267, or palford@mbcb.org

Registration fee: \$5.00
Everyone present will
receive a new hymnal

Contact the Church Music
Department for registration form,
or you may register
at the door.

AREA KEYBOARD FESTIVALS - 2009

AREA	LOCATION	FESTIVAL LEADER	PHONE C=Church O=Office
THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 2009 - 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.			
Area 2	FBC, 300 N. Church Street, Tupelo, 38804	Randy Wood	C-662-842-1327
Area 4	Fairview BC, 127 Airline Rd., Columbus, 39702	Slater Murphy	C-662-328-2924
Area 5	FBC, Jackson, 431 N. State St., Jackson, 39201	Wyndy South	O-601-292-3272
Area 6	Poplar Springs Dr. BC, 4032 Poplar Springs Dr., Meridian, 39305	Lloyd Sutton	C-601-485-5106
Area 7	FBC, 1700 Delaware Ave., McComb, 39648	Jane Wilkinson Phillip Alford	C-601-684-2971
Area 8	FBC, 607 W. Fifth St., Laurel, 39442	Joy Hughlett	C-601-649-5710
Area 9	FBC, 902 Live Oak Ave., Pascagoula, 39567	Michaëlle Harrison	C-228-762-2343
FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 2009 - 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.			
Area 1	Hernando BC, 11 E. Center St., Hernando, 38632	Barry Tweedy	C-662-421-6361
Area 8	Carterville BC, 115 Carterville Rd., Petal, 39465	Kathy Vail	O-601-318-6181
SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 2009 - 9:30 - NOON			
Area 3	Emmanuel BC, 245 Meadowbrook Rd., Grenada, 38901	Barry Worrell	C-662-226-5316
Area 3	North Greenwood BC, 615 Grand Blvd., Greenwood, 38935	Patricia Ethridge	C-662-453-2801

For more information, contact the Church Music Department: 1-800-748-1651, 601-292-3272, wsouth@mbcb.org

GA Mother/Daughter Overnights

(GRADES 1-6)



SEPTEMBER 19-20
OCTOBER 10-11

\$40 per person

A special time for mothers and their GA daughters (grades 1-6) to share the excitement of missions learning. Activities include worship, campfire, crafts, recreation and a missionary visit. All overnights begin at 5 p.m. on Friday and end at 2 p.m. on Saturday.

REGISTRATION DEADLINES:

September 5 for September Overnight

September 26 for October Overnight

If space is still available after the deadline date, reservations will be accepted at the cost of \$45 per person. No refunds after the deadline date.

For more info, contact the Mississippi wMu, 601-292-3316 or 1-800-748-1651, ext 316, or kredditt@mbcb.org

GET READY!!! YOUTH MINISTER'S RETREAT

November 10-12
Lake Lanier
Lanier Islands

Speakers:
Allen Jackson, NOBTS
Randy Hall, Student Life
Birmingham, Ala.

Registration info coming

2nd Annual Fall Singles Conference

Saturday, October 4, 2008

6:00 - 8:30 p.m. First Baptist Church, Vandalia

12513 Hwy 57, Vandalia, MS

228-826-5806

*SINGLES
but NEVER alone
Determined to*

Speaker: JJ Jasper

RA DAY

SEPTEMBER 20, 2008

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE • CLINTON

REGISTRATION

3:00 P.M.

PROGRAM

3:30 P.M.

GAME

6 P.M.

COST: \$6

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SACK SUPPER
AND DRINK

DEADLINE

FOR REGISTRATION
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

QUESTIONS?

DEANNA VAIL AT

(601) 292-3335 OR (800) 748-1651, EXT. 335

2009

BAPTIST DOCTRINE STUDY PREVIEW BRUNCHES

Led by:
Argile Smith
FBC, Biloxi



All scheduled for **9 A.M. - NOON**

Monday, January 26

Main Street BC, Hattiesburg

Tuesday, January 27

Brandon BC, Brandon

Thursday, January 29

FBC, Oxford

Featured Book

VIBRANT CHURCH

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IN THE 21st CENTURY**

Thom S. Rainer & Daniel L. Akin

Preregistration requested. The \$10 registration fee includes the full brunch and the featured study course book.

For more information, contact the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department, 601-292-3284, 1-800-748-1651, ext. 284, or dbrashier@mbcb.org

37th Annual

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OCTOBER 3-4, 2008

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Contact Communication
Services:
1-800-748-1651, ext. 378
(Miss. only),
or 601-292-3378
or E-mail:
jchen@mbcb.org

PROGRAM PERSONALITIES

DONNA AINSWORTH **HOPE FERGUSON**
BETH ANDREWS **SANDRA FITTS**
KARY BARTH **EVA NELL HUNTER**
MARY BROUSSARD **PEGGY TACON**

Ministers' Wives Conference

"At the feet of Jesus" presented by Rita Sweatt



Agenda

1:15 p.m.	Registration - Chapel, FBC, Jackson
1:30	Welcome and introductions Alan Woodward, Fellowship greeting Shirley Futral
2:00	"At the Feet of Jesus" - Mary of Bethany
3:00	Fellowship
3:30	"Listening and Loving at the Feet of Jesus"
4:45	Adjourn

For more info contact the Pastor/Leadership
Development Department: 601-292-3305,
1-800-748-1651, ext 305, or kmcdonnell@mbcb.org

South Mississippi

Monday, Sept. 8
Pascagoula
FBC

Central Mississippi

Tuesday, Sept. 9
Brandon
Brandon BC

North Mississippi

Thursday, Sept. 11
Olive Branch
Longview Heights BC

All Clinics:
6:30 - 8 p.m.

Bible Drill Clinics

2008 Leadership Training Classes
For adults who lead Bible Drill



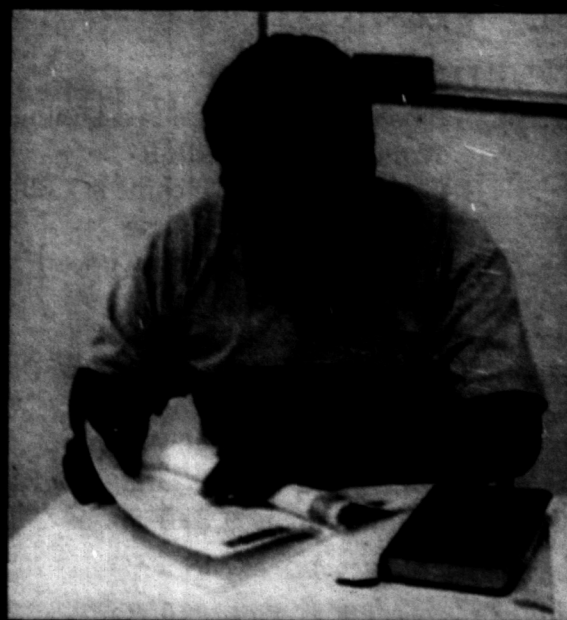
Children's Leader Class
Don Hicks
Consultant
D&FM, MBCB

Student Leader Class
Steve Jackson

Pastor, McLaurin Heights BC
Pearl, Miss.



For more information, contact the Discipleship & Family
Ministry Department: 1-800-748-1651, ext. 284,
601-292-3284 or dbrashier@mbcb.org



Your Margaret Mackey gifts engaged 700 students in 35 literacy ministries throughout the state last year. Encourage your church to support the state missions offering this fall.

Pray this day for...

September 5-18, 2008

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 601-292-3304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-7729 (PRAY)

"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, 'The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.' The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord."
Lamentations 3: 22-26

(1) DT Launch Day (D&FM Emphasis); (2) Pray for believers in the state of Orissa, India. On August 23, a Hindu leader was killed by terrorists. Christians have been blamed, though not guilty. As a result, great violence has been stirred up against Christians, raping, torturing and killing Christians and burning churches and homes.

P is a dedicated young Indian woman who has committed her life to serving the Lord through nursing in India. She is currently the only Christian student among Hindus in the nursing school where she studies. She openly shares her faith with her fellow students. Pray that her witness will result in other nursing students coming to know the Lord.

(1) Bible Drill Clinic, FBC, Pascagoula (D&FM); (2) B is a college student in India who recently received Christ. When her brother saw her reading a Bible in their home, he beat her, destroyed the Bible and told her to never bring a Bible in their home again. Pray for B to not be discouraged by her family's resistance and to keep growing in her faith.

(1) January Bible Study Preview, Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain (SS); (2) Recently in India, a lady on a train was witnessed to and received Christ. She is in a very influential position and is eager to use her position as a means to reach many people for the gospel. Pray that she will grow and become grounded in the Word and mature in her faith.

(1) Bible Drill Clinic, Brandon BC, Brandon (D&FM); (2) A minister for Christ in the state of Punjab in India reports that the atmosphere is heavy with the presence of Satan. Twenty-four hours a day, over loudspeakers the Sikh holy books are read from the temples. There is nowhere to go to escape the noise. Pray for God to miraculously close the ears of believers to not be tormented by this evil.

(1) January Bible Study Preview, BSU, Delta State University, Cleveland (SS); (2) R is a native Indian who is working to start churches in a part of India that has almost no churches. Pray for R and the other young men he is working with to hear God's voice and direction as they move out to begin this work. Pray for their protection in an antagonistic area.

R ministers among college students in Bangalore, India. Recently several students have shown a real interest in receiving Jesus Christ as their Savior. The students are both Hindu and Muslim. Pray for R's protection in sharing the gospel. Pray for the students to commit their lives to Christ and grow and become strong witnesses for Christ in India.

(1) January Bible Study Preview, Mississippi College, Clinton (SS); (2) Mr. M has been a part of an extremist Hindu group in India. Recently at his family's request, a believer prayed for his daughter-in-law who was suffering illness during her pregnancy. God healed her. Now Mr. M is interested in hearing more about the gospel. Pray that he will understand the gospel and receive Christ.

(1) Bible Drill Clinic, Longview Heights BC, Olive Branch (D&FM); (2) Connect Conferences: Leading the Church to Reach Young Adults, 11th-12th (CG/LifeWay); (2) Pray for a group going to India in the next few months to teach on children's work in the church. Pray for their wisdom in preparation, and their health on their trip.

(1) January Bible Study Preview, William Carey University, Hattiesburg (SS); (2) The B family has recently moved to a part of India where they must be very secretive in sharing the gospel. Pray for God's protection for parents and children. God is already mightily using them, but if discovered, they would have to leave.

(1) AMD/MBCB Prayer-Leadership Retreat, Garaywa, Clinton, 4th-5th (MS); (2) Pray that the Mississippi Baptist Board employees will be good stewards of the trust given to them by fellow Mississippi Baptists.

(1) Macedonian Call, Garaywa, (wMu); (2) Missionary Parent Fellowship, Garaywa, 12th-13th; (3) Handbell Seminar, Brandon BC, Brandon, 12th-13th (CM); (3) Pray for the outreach of the JESUS film throughout the world. Many Baptist churches and ministries are using this as a powerful evangelistic tool to reach people in their native languages.

Pray for Bangalore Baptist Hospital, touching over 500,000 people annually. It is one key to reaching the state of Karnataka, India, for Jesus Christ. Of the 55 million people who live in this state, only 1.9 percent claim any form of Christianity. The majority worship the countless gods of Hinduism. The hospital's priority on evangelism has resulted in 900 churches across the state in 35 years.

(1) Mississippi Missionary Fellowship, Garaywa, (wMu); (2) India is the largest democracy in the world with a population of around 1 billion. Freedom of religion is the law of the land, however extremist Hindu groups are rapidly gaining power in governmental positions. Pray for the election of officials who will uphold and protect this freedom of religion. Pray for the protection of believers.

"Your Invitation to Paradise" Fueled by Faith – State Women's Retreat

October 17-18, 2008

Garaywa Camp and Conference Center

FRIDAY, October 17

- 3:00 p.m. Check-in Begins; Prayerwalk; Rest & Relax
- 5:45 Welcome Aboard & Garaywa Luau featuring "the Creative Dramatist"
- 7:00 Worship Celebration I
- Welcome, Introductions & Call to Worship
- 7:15 Missionary Prayer Time
- 7:45 "Chocolate in Concert"
- 8:45 Theme Interpretation by "the Creative Dramatist"
- 9:15 Fellowship Luau - Chocolate Fountain included J
- 9:45 Prayer & Share Groups I
- 11:00 Good Night!

SATURDAY, October 18

- 7:30 a.m. Break the Fast (Breakfast-Dining Hall)
- 8:30 Worship Celebration II
- Good Morning Welcome & Call to Worship
- 8:45 Missionary Prayer Time
- 9:15 "Little Brown Light in Concert"
- 10:15 Fellowship Luau
- 10:45 Prayer & Share Groups II
- 11:30 Theme Interpretation by "the Creative Dramatist"
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch Luau
- 1:30 Worship Celebration III
- "The Twenty – Get Fit for the KING", Janie Walters
- 2:30 Commitments & Reflections

Ms. Chocolate

Janie Walters

Becky Brown

Kathy Prady

SPECIAL GUESTS

Go to www.mbc.org

Registration Deadline: October 8

For additional information, please contact MS wMu
at 800-748-1651, ext. 317; 601-292-3317; or E-mail Lmiller@mbcb.org

Senior Adult Retreat IV

September 25-26

FBC, McComb

Speaker

Sonny Adkins

Former state evangelism director

Choirs:

- 25th – FBC Senior Adult Choir
Pascagoula
- 26th – Lamar County Association Choir

Gatherings:

- 25th – "Professor Cornpone"
Joseph Harris, Ellisville
- 26th – Piano/organ duet
Irene Martin and Ed Sudduth

For info: 601-292-3373 or gshows@MBCB.org

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5850 Hwy 84 West • Laurel, MS 39443
www.salemheights.org

• • • • Scheduled Speakers • • • •

SUNDAY 9:00am & 6:00pm

Emir Caner • Dean, The College at Southwestern - Former Muslim

SUNDAY 10:30am & 6:00pm

Jimmy Jackson • Pastor, Whitesburg Baptist Church
Huntsville, Alabama

MONDAY 6:30pm

Don Wilton • Pastor, FBC Spartanburg
Spartanburg, North Carolina

TUESDAY 6:30pm

Johnny Hunt • Pastor, FBC • Woodstock, Georgia
Jerry Vines • Woodstock, Georgia

WEDNESDAY 6:30pm

Fred Luter • Pastor, Franklin Ave Baptist Church
New Orleans, Louisiana

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Houston Road Baptist Church • 649-4349 • Pastor, Tommy Brill

Tuesday: Speaker • Don Wilton

FBC Ellisville • 477-3256 • Pastor, Frankie Clark

Wednesday: Speaker • Fred Luter

Freedom Baptist Church • 428-1331 • Pastor, Tim Lee

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VACATION BIBLE SCHOOLS

1. **First Church, Rose Hill:** Average attendance, 35.
2. **Gunter Road Church, Florence:** Enrollment of 65. Gene Jordan, pastor.
3. **Diamondhead Church, Diamondhead:** Enrollment of 89; first VBS led by the church without volunteer assistance since Hurricane Katrina.



**VBS
2008**



1. First Church Rose Hill



3. Diamondhead Church

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REVIVALS AND HOMECOMINGS

1. **Rocky Point Church, 150th anniversary:** Sept. 7 - Robert Parish, speaker; Wilma's Group, music, with covered dish lunch; Sept. 14 - Walt Grayson, speaker; Center Crossing, afternoon singing and dinner on the ground; Sept. 21 - Don Cook, speaker; String Band, music; Sept. 28 (homecoming day) - Tim Tolleson, speaker; Southern Heritage, afternoon singing.
2. **Bethesda Church, Terry:** Homecoming and sanctuary dedication, Sept. 7, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch.
3. **Moak's Creek Church, Bogue Chitto:** Homecoming, Sept. 7, 10 a.m., with Sunday School, worship, lunch, and afternoon singing.
4. **Parkway Church, Kosciusko:** Revival, Sept. 14 - 17; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Eddie Pilgrim, speaker; Steve and Becky Carver, music; Don Cook, pastor.
5. **Friendship East Church, Charleston:** Homecoming, Sept. 14; 10 a.m., the Kilgore Sisters; 11 a.m., worship, followed by potluck lunch; Truman Scarborough, speaker.
6. **Pilgrim's Rest Church, Batesville:** Revival and homecoming, Sept. 4 - 7; Thurs. - Sat., 7 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m., followed by lunch and afternoon singing; Charlie Foster, speaker; Fred Pearrow, pastor.
7. **Mt. Carmel Church, Philadelphia:** Revival, Sept. 7 - 10; Sun., 11 a.m., followed by meal; 7 p.m. nightly. Mack Alford, pastor and speaker; Larron Johnson, music.
8. **Blythe Creek Church, Choctaw Association:** Revival, Sept. 14 - 17; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Randall Creel, speaker; Tim Hudson, music.
9. **Beacon Street Church, Philadelphia:** Homecoming and 60th anniversary, Sept. 14; worship, 11 a.m., followed by lunch; Mack Alford, speaker.
10. **New Hope Church, Tupelo:** Revival, Sept. 14 - 17; Sun., 5 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Bobby Holland, speaker; Greg Reed, music; Lowell Johnson, pastor.
11. **First Church, Runnelstown:** Revival, Sept. 14 - 17; Sun., 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Dean Stewart, speaker; McKay Pearce, music; Chris Layton, pastor.
12. **Concord Church, Booneville:** Revival, Sept. 14 - 18; Sun., fellowship meal, 5 p.m.; all services, 7 p.m.; Bill Foley, speaker; Robert E. Walker, pastor.
13. **Elon Church, Macon:** Homecoming, Sept. 7, 11 a.m., followed by lunch; James Snowden, speaker; Shirley Battle, music.

BIBLIOCIPHER

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HQD BK WBVL BK
PYOYAGYU SAW, DX
DSYW ZBGY SY
NXCYP DX HYOXWY
DSY KXVK XT ZXU,
YGYV DX DSYW DSBD
HYRAYGY XV SAK
VBWY.

MXSV XZY: DCYRGY

Clue: : O=C

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Hosea Ten Twelve

1. **Mississippi College's** Gore Galleries will host a photo exhibition Sept. 9 - Dec. 19 of Katrina photos by Melody Golding focusing on the storm's impact on Mississippi women. For more information, call (601) 925-3880.

2. Over 300 attended the Southern Senior Adult Regional Rally Aug. 26 on the Hattiesburg campus of William Carey University. Break-out leaders were Kandi Anderson, humorist/radio personality of Gulfport; Talmadge Smith, former adult music director of Brookhaven; and Charles Welch, Minister of Senior Adults, First Church, Hattiesburg. The Lincoln Choral of Brookhaven provided special music and Dennis Daniels, Congregation/Pastor Care Minister of First Church, Jackson, delivered the keynote message.

STATE CHANGES

1. Ricky White has retired after 40 years of ministry, most recently serving Hamilton Church, Robertsdale, Ala. He is available for pulpit supply and revivals. Call (251) 946-2371 or write 19565 Oak Circle, Seminole, AL 36574.

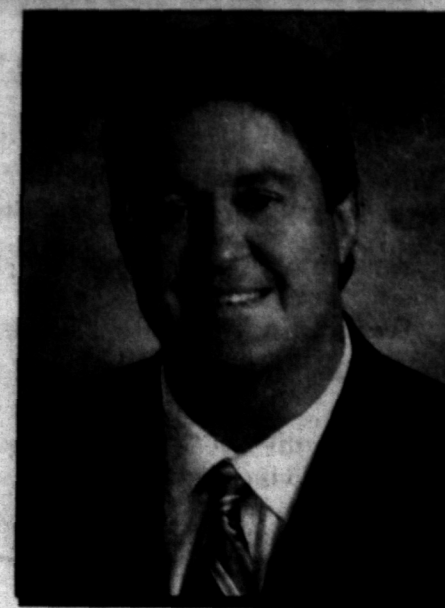


1. White

3. Steven Gaines, pastor of Bellevue Church in Cordova, Tenn., will deliver the keynote address at the fifth annual Blue Mountain College Healthy Church Conference, scheduled for Sept. 8. Three worship services and four workshops will be offered from 8:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. The conference is free and open to church leaders of all denominations. Registration for the conference will begin at 8:30 a.m. Lunch will be provided for \$5. For complete information, call (662) 685-4771 extension 179, or send an email to rmeeks@bmc.edu.

4. Blue Mountain College has welcomed its largest class of first-time, full-time freshman students in recent history, and enrollment records across the board are expected to fall. While registration will continue for a few more days, 75 traditional freshmen have already enrolled for the first semester — a 27 percent increase from a year ago.

Visit us online
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BAPTISTS www.mbc.org

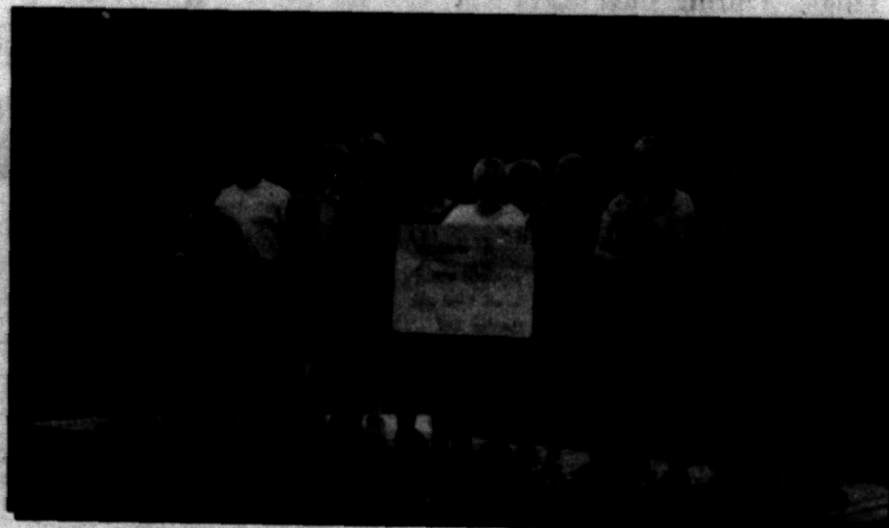


3. Gaines

JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Academy Church, Tippah County



2. New Bethel Church, Carrollton



3. Henson and Russell

1. Academy Church, Tippah County, recently honored Thomas Miller for 44 years of teaching Sunday School and James (Dank) Medlin for service as a deacon for 50 years. Shown are Miller, Dorothy Miller, Earl Barron, Medlin, and Klue Medlin.

2. The youth of New Bethel Church, Carrollton, participated in a fishing tournament June 28. Shown are the participants.

3. Oak Hill Church, Meridian recently ordained Kevin Henson (on left) as deacon. Shown with him is Pastor Mike Russell.

4. Wheeler Grove Church, Corinth, is having Judgment House Sept. 5 - 7 and 12 - 14, 6 p.m. nightly. For more information, call (662) 287-2764.

5. Fellowship Church, State Line, recently ordained Richard Fick as deacon.

6. Mt. Zion Church, Eupora, will observe Grandparent's Day Sept. 7 during the morning worship service, with the children and youth of the church having a special program followed by lunch.

7. Sylva Rena Church, Water Valley, held disaster relief training June 26 with 46 individuals across north Mississippi earning certification in the areas of mud out, feeding, and blue tarp (roofing). The second training Aug. 16 certified 20 individuals in chainsaw, chaplaincy, and childcare.

8. Crossgates Church, Brandon, will host the Getty's in concert Sept. 7, 6 p.m. Free admission.

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BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Forgive Early and Often

Matthew 18:21-35

Pastor and author Chuck Swindoll came across a classified ad a few years ago that demonstrated the power of unforgiveness. The ad simply stated: "Wedding dress for sale. Never worn. Will sale or trade for .38 pistol." Wow! Her resentment almost led to murder. As we examine this week's lesson, we must recall the responsibility and obligation we have to set others free by sharing the freedom of forgiveness found in Christ.

I. The Count (Matthew 18:21-27)
In the first two chapters of Amos we discover the rabbinic methodology of forgiveness. These verses state seven times that God would forgive a nation three times, but on the fourth offense, punishment would follow. Judaism taught that a man could not forgive more than God, therefore forgiveness toward others was limited to three times.

There are two possible explanations why Peter used the number seven as a "forgiveness count." It could have been that he was seeking clarity from a teaching that Jesus shared in Luke 17:4 about whether or not seven times was the literal stopping point to forgive someone. Another possibility of Peter's inquiry could have been that he wanted to demonstrate how gracious he would be if the situation of forgiving someone arose. How surprised Peter must have been when Jesus stated that you cannot put a number on genuine forgiveness. The Rabbis were still teaching to forgive others only three times. It is possible that Peter felt he was demonstrating extraordinary grace and mercy. He took the number three, doubled it, and added one for good measure.



McKay

Jesus used Peter's question to share a parable about the depths of forgiveness. The times that I have heard this parable taught or discussed, too much attention has been given to the monetary amount that the servant owed the king. The financial aspect of the parable is not the essence that Jesus desired to communicate. Think about it this way: if you do not have any money, does it really matter if the debt is one dollar or a million? At the core of these verses is the demonstration of remarkable forgiveness and liberation. Yes, the servant could have never compensated the king for all that was owed, but the application for you and me is to "release" (verse 27, NASB) others who have mistreated us. Forgiveness in the life of a believer showcases the astounding, redemptive heart of God. It puts on display the riches of His abundant mercy and His amazing grace for all to see.

II. The Comparison (Matthew 18:28-30)

We see the servant experience forgiveness, and yet he found someone that owed him a small debt. Remember, the amount is not of primary relevance, the practice of forgiveness is. The comparison we read about here is not an evaluation of coins, but rather one of character. More than an obligation, forgiveness is a high calling, an opportunity to be a part of something eternal, to pour back our gratitude to the One who forgave us everything.

This servant must have had a problem with short term memory. The forgiveness he received cleared his account, but it failed to conform his attitude. He had experienced the freedom of a burden being lifted only moments before and now he refuses to free his fellow man. Could it be that this servant was more concerned with what he could get out of others than what he could share? Much like the bride left standing at the altar, the servant's attitude was exhibited by him reacting violently to another human being. He saw to it that this man

not only pay him back, but suffer the shame of imprisonment as well. When we choose not to forgive others, we are producing relational prisons. Both parties suffer when we place someone in the chains of unforgiveness.

III. The Caution (Matthew 18:31-35)

The most memorable stories in the Bible are the ones with a powerful conclusion. This brief parable is no exception. When the king heard the report of what had happened he was angry. The unforgiving servant missed the whole intention of the king's dismissal of debt. Obviously, these verses do not imply that one's salvation will be removed if he or she fails to forgive. However, they can serve as words of caution for those who live with bitterness and contempt in their heart. When people around you see you forgive, they may see Christ in a way they have never known Him before. They may be drawn to love, worship, and trust our great pardoning God.

McKay is pastor of Oakvale Church, Oak Vale.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Declaring the Lord's Grace

Lesson Passage: 1 Samuel 1:1-2, 6-7, 12-18, 24-28; 2:1-11

By Ginger M. Caughman

"Who knows what God might do if His people prayed fervently for spiritual revival?" Words of Billy Graham, now almost 90. We begin our Fall study during turbulent times in our world and nation. Perhaps you are experiencing additional disorientation or turmoil in your personal life or within your family. Before our 13-week study is concluded we will have gone through and thankfully will be past much rhetoric in September and October because of an emotional political campaign. Before our study ends in November, we will have elected a new United States president.

The Bible always speaks to our needs. This timely study seeks to answer our questions and desires of "Finding Stability in a Turbulent World!" through the study in Samuel's two-volumes. Begin a prayerful

reading in your own Bible of the narrative of Israel's transition from "a tribal confederation led by judges" to a nation with kings. During their turbulent times, the Lord God proved to be Israel's "Rock" of stability!

The comparison is clear. God is available to be our rock and our stability. Let us learn during these months to better depend on Him! Martin Luther's world was anything but stable when he affirmed his reliance on God based on Scripture (Psalm 46) and wrote the great hymn of our faith, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God."

1. Acknowledge the Lord's Sovereignty

Four major characters dominate the story told in Samuel. "Hannah, Samuel,

Saul and David come at a millennial midpoint: 1,000 years after the Call of Abraham and 1,000 years before the birth



Caughman

of Jesus, the Christ!" I was captivated by this sentence by Eugene H. Peterson (The Message). To see these events more vividly, draw a time line and look at these incredible facts. Our God is at work in history. God had a plan for

Samuel "before the foundation of the world!" (Ephesians 1:3-4). Likewise God is at work in our world today.

Prayer begins and ends Samuel. Hannah's prayer (1 Samuel 2) and David's (near the end in 2 Samuel 22-23). When we don't know how to face life, we can trust God's Sovereignty.

2. Seek Strength in the Lord's Presence

This lesson reminds us that God welcomes our honest thoughts and feelings on any subject. When have you last poured out your heart to God? Hannah's deep prayer led the priest Eli to think she was drunk. She wanted to bear a child and was in deep distress before God in honest prayer.

The Mayo Clinic reports, "ten to fifteen percent of cou-

ples in the United States are infertile." (MayoClinic.com) Childless couples who desire children today have many options. If you are broken hearted or have feelings of resentment for others who are enjoying their children or grandchildren, pour out your heart to the Lord as Hannah did. Pray with your spouse. God works miracles through modern medicine. Many medical options are available for infertility. Childless couples desiring a child may want to consider adoption. Talk to your doctor for advice. Read the Psalms for excellent examples of honest prayers covering all human expressions and conditions as you seek God's presence and strength.

3. Experience the Lord's Peace

Don't miss the significance of what the priest told Hannah, "Go in peace and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of Him." (v. 17 NIV)

A well-worn chapter in my Bible is Philippians 4. Our God has given us the antidote for worry and the prescription for inner peace. Philippians tells

not to be anxious but often we are! What can we do with our concerns? The Bible says, pray about everything and "God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus!" (Philippians 4:6-7 TEV). Scripture records, Hannah ate heartily and her face was radiant. In his song "Through It All" Andrea Crouch concludes, "I've learned to depend upon His Word!"

4. Tell Others About the Lord's Grace

What a blessing to ask and receive prayers from others in the body of Christ. I wouldn't begin to write about God's Word without the promised faithful prayers of friends. Share God's grace as the source of your stability in our Lord Jesus Christ. Hannah praised God! Tell someone today what the Lord has done for you. Like William Reynolds hymn, "Share His Love by sharing of your faith...Every moment, every day!"

Caughman is a member of First Church, Magee.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will

be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

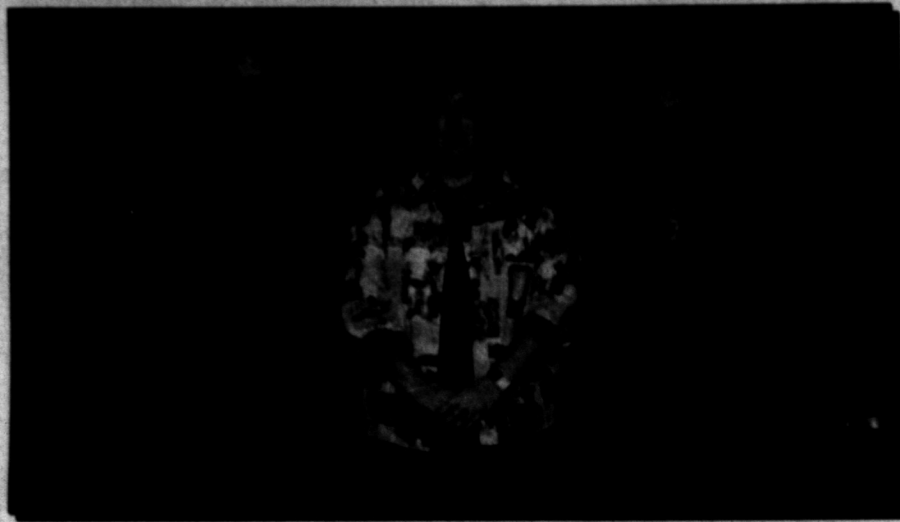
are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE BAPTIST Record



1. Pierce Ordination, Bethsaida Church



2. Carman ordination, Iuka Church



3. Calvary Church, Bogue Chitto



4. Lakeside Church GAs

1. **Bethsaida Church, Philadelphia** ordained Glen Pierce as deacon Aug. 24. Shown also his wife Sue and pastor Billy James.

2. **Iuka Church, Iuka**, ordained Shane Carman as deacon Aug. 24. Shown are Carman and pastor Ronnie Hatfield.

3. The GAs and moms of **Calvary Church, Bogue Chitto**, recently had a lock-in. Shown are the participants.

4. **Lakeside Church, Hattiesburg**, recently held an awards ceremony for its GAs who completed mission projects during the year. Shown are the participants.

5. **Corinth Church, Magee**, recognizes its children and youth Bible drillers. Shown are the participants.

6. **Mt. Olive Church, Coila**, ordained Steve Flanagan as deacon June 22. Shown are Jody Wooten, Flanagan, Janet Flanagan, and Hunter Flanagan.

7. **Sunrise Church, Carthage**, sent pastor David Addy and a group of men to aid in the work of Nanih Waiya Baptist Children's Village. Shown are the participants.

8. **Crowder Church, Crowder**, honored Fred Bailey for years of service to the Lord and to the church as Sunday School administrative assistant. Pastor Larry Kilgore presented Bailey with a plaque of appreciation.

9. The children and youth of **Mt. Zion Church, Webster Association**, enjoyed a back to school bash Aug. 1, with praise and worship, pizza, a scavenger hunt, crafts, games, and more.

10. **First Church, Ozona**, is hosting the Providentials Quartet Sept. 20, 7 p.m.

11. **Cleary Church, Florence**, is hosting the Mississippi Singing Churchmen Sept. 23, 7 p.m.

13. **Leaf River Church, Smith County**, will host New Wine Sept. 13, 5 p.m., followed by a churchwide fish fry.



5. Corinth Church, Magee



6. Flanagan family



7. Sunrise Church, Carthage



8. Kilgore and Bailey